

24. DRAGONFLIES FEEDING ON HOUSEFLIES

Dragonflies are well known predators of certain harmful insects such as mosquitoes and termites (Corbet 1962, Tillyard 1967). Instances of dragonfly predation on the common housefly, *Musca domestica*, has not been recorded earlier and seems worthwhile to report.

Two species of dragonflies, namely, *Anax immaculifrons* Rambur and *Orthetrum sabina* (Drury) have been observed preying upon house-flies. *O. sabina*, was often captured while still holding a live house-fly between its mandibles. Males of *O. sabina* were caught on September 3, 1979 and July 28, 1980 just

after they had pounced on a house-fly. The dragonfly held the prey by its neck using the forelegs to clasp and support from below. At this time the body of the dragonfly is perpendicular to the axis of the house-fly body. First, the dragonfly devoured the head of its victim, and then proceeded to eat the remaining body, except the wings which it rejected. The time taken by *O. sabina* in fully devouring a house-fly does not exceed one minute.

Thanks are due to Dr. P. K. Sen-Sarma, Forest Entomologist, Forest Entomology Branch, Forest Research Institute and Colleges, Dehra Dun, India, for facilities.

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REFERENCES

CORBET, P. S. (1962): A biology of dragonflies. Witherby, London.

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25. MORE BUTTERFLIES FROM BOMBAY

In 1951 (*JBNHS* 50:331) A.E.G. Best published a list of the butterflies of Bombay and Salsette. Since then the list has been amended and added to by several authors (*JBNHS* 53:282, 54:215, 56:358, 57:233, 74:190, 76:369). I now make five more additions to the list.

Lethe europa Fabricius—The Bamboo Tree-brown. The nearest published record I can trace is from Matheran (Davidson, *JBNHS* 8:556). I took two specimens in the Borivli National Park on 2nd February 1975.

Zizula hylax (Fabricius)—The Tiny Grass Blue. Though this species is not included in the

lists of Bombay butterflies, E. H. Aitken and E. Comber (*A list of the Butterflies of the Konkan*, *JBNHS* 15: 47) mention that it occurs in Bombay and Salsette. On 23rd January 1975 I took two specimens in the Borivli National Park.

Lampides boeticus (Linnaeus)—The Peablu. This butterfly was very abundant in the Borivli National Park on 9th February 1975. It was seen on the roadside, in bushes, and on the wet banks of the lakes. The Peablu is very common throughout India and was probably overlooked by Best.

Colotis eucharis (Fabricius)—The Plain Or-

ange Tip. Though not included on the Bombay list there are three specimens in the Society's collection, collected by N. B. Kinnear in Bombay in 1972. I have a male specimen taken at Devnar (below Trombay Hill) on 14th February 1973.

3, RESHMA APARTMENTS,
13 PALI HILL,
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BOMBAY 400 050,
May 20, 1980.

Arnetta vindhiana vindhiana (Moore)—The Vindhyan Bob. I have a male specimen taken on 9th February 1975 in the Borivli National Park. The species has been recorded from Matheran (see Aitken and Comber, loc. cit., p. 53).

SALMAN ABDULALI

26. STRANGE PRACTICE OF A CATERPILLAR

The incident recorded by A. S. Bhaduri (1980, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 76 (2): 368) under this heading is by no means unusual. In fact it is the usual method adopted by all Hesperiid larvae to prevent their habitation being fouled by frass. They possess a special organ, a comb-like flap, at the anus with which

they flip the pellet of frass well away from their domicile. The action is purely automatic. The butterfly with 'white-spotted black wings' observed on the near-by wall was almost certainly the imago that had emerged from the *Curcuma*-feeding caterpillar, probably *Celaenorrhinus* sp.

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27. *VICIA MONANTHA* RETZ. AND *SPOROBOLUS AIROIDES* (TORR.) TORR.—NEW TO INDIAN FLORA

During botanical exploration of Bikaner and Churu districts (Western Rajasthan), two interesting plants namely *Vicia monantha* Retz. (*Papilionaceae*) and *Sporobolus airoides* (Torr.) Torr. (*Gramineae*) were collected. A perusal of relevant literature on the flora of India and studies at Central National Herbarium, Calcutta revealed that these are new additions to the flora of India. *Vicia monan-*

tha Retz. (syn. *V. griffithii* Baker) had, however, been included in J. D. Hooker's *FLORA OF BRITISH INDIA* 2:178. 1876 on the basis of specimens collected from Puniab and Baluchistan (Rawal Pindae and Futteyjung: *Griffith* 1114, *Clarke* 105 CAL). *Sporobolus airoides* (Torr.) Torr., a native of North America, is said to be introduced into India during present century as a fodder grass (Bor. N. L.